

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application as presently amended is respectfully requested. Claims 1, 3-4, 6-10, and 13-14 are pending. Claims 1, 7, and 10 have been amended. Claims 5, 11-12, and 15 have been canceled. No claims have been added.

The specification has been objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for claimed subject matter. In particular, claims 6 and 13 have been so objected to. In response, Applicant has amended the specification. Applicant respectfully requests that the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 7 and 10-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter that the Applicant regards as the invention. In response, Applicant has amended claims 7 and 10 to further clarify that the dovetail arrangement is formed by a rearmost pin thread and a protrusion. Applicant respectfully submits that the indefiniteness rejection has been obviated and respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4, 6-11, and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,696,498 to Church ("Church"). In response, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to recite, *inter alia*, the features of dependent claims 2 and 5, except that the features of claims 2 and 5 apply to a majority of the threads. Independent claim 10 has similarly been amended to recite, *inter alia*, the features of dependent claims 11 and 12. Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claims 1 and 10 each distinguish over Church and respectfully requests that the rejection thereof be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4, 6-11, and 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,537,429 to Landriault ("Landriault"). Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to the independent claims discussed above with respect to the novelty rejection based on Church also apply to the novelty rejection based on Landriault.

Claims 2 and 11 have been canceled, thereby rendering the rejection thereof based on either Church or Landriault moot.

Claims 3-4, 6-9, and 13-14 depend from and further limit independent claims 1 and 10, respectively. Applicant respectfully submits that each of these dependent claims distinguishes over both Church and Landriault for at least the reasons set forth above. Withdrawal of the rejection of these dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 5 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Church in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,415,442 to Klementich ("Klementich"). Church is cited as disclosing all the features of claims 5 and 12 except that "...the stab or front flank is not disclosed to be at 45 degrees." Klementich is cited as supplying this admitted deficiency of Church.

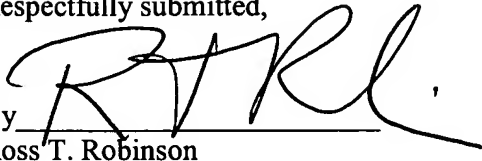
Applicant respectfully submits that each of amended independent claims 1 and 10 as presently amended distinguishes over the cited combination of Church and Klementich. In particular, claims 1 and 10 each include at least one distinguishing feature over the cited combination, namely, that the threads include a rear face oriented at a second predetermined angle, and that the second predetermined angle is 45 . Given that neither Church nor Klementich teaches or suggests this feature, Applicant respectfully submits that each of independent claims 1 and 10 as amended herein distinguishes over the cited combination and is in condition for allowance. Each of the pending claims depending from claim 1 or claim 10 is similarly believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Church in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,707,001 to Johnson ("Johnson"). Claim 15 has been canceled, thereby rendering the rejection thereof moot.

In view of the above, each of the presently-pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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